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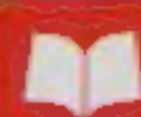
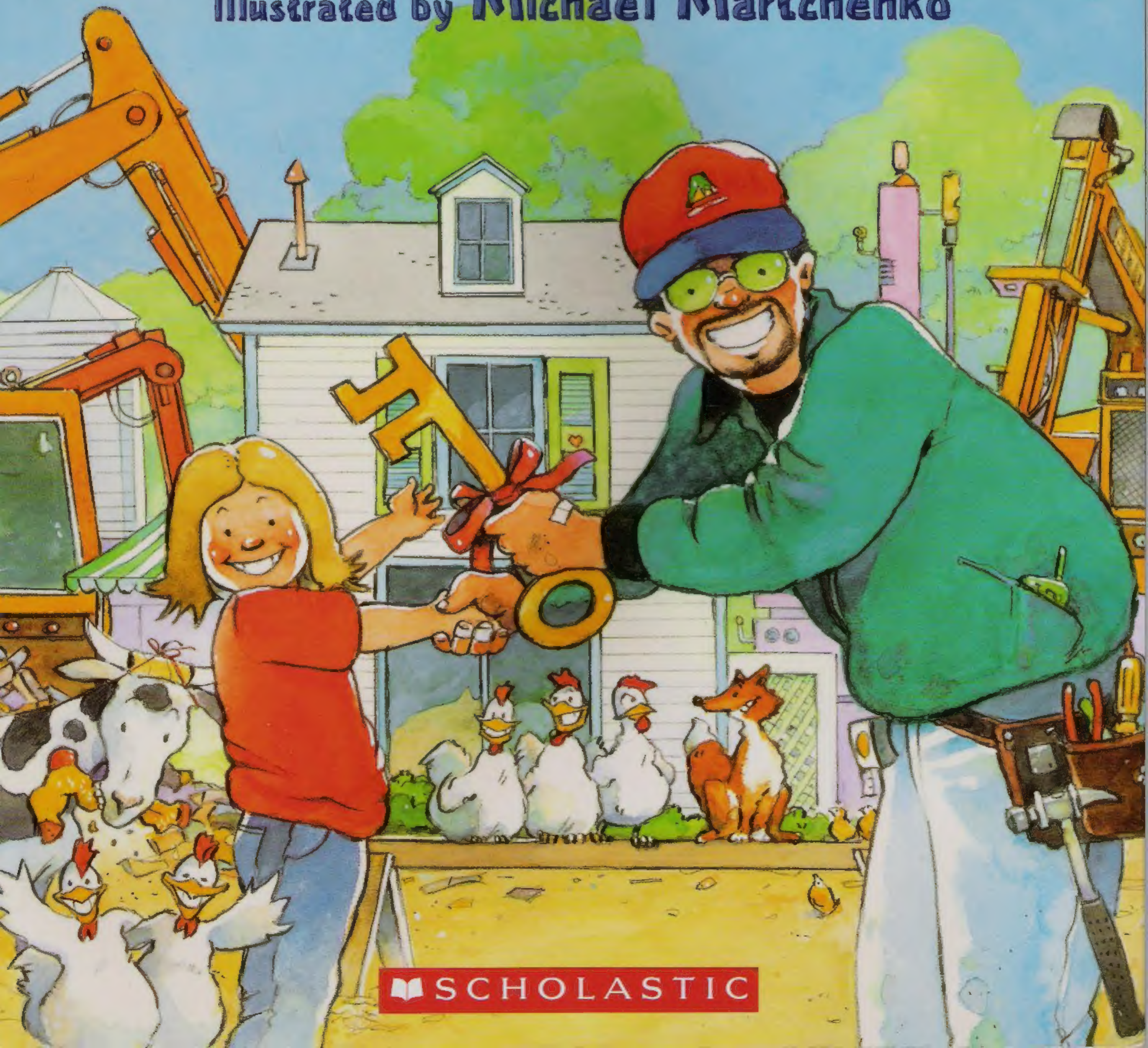
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Robert Munsch

PLAYHOUSE

Illustrated by Michael Martchenko



SCHOLASTIC

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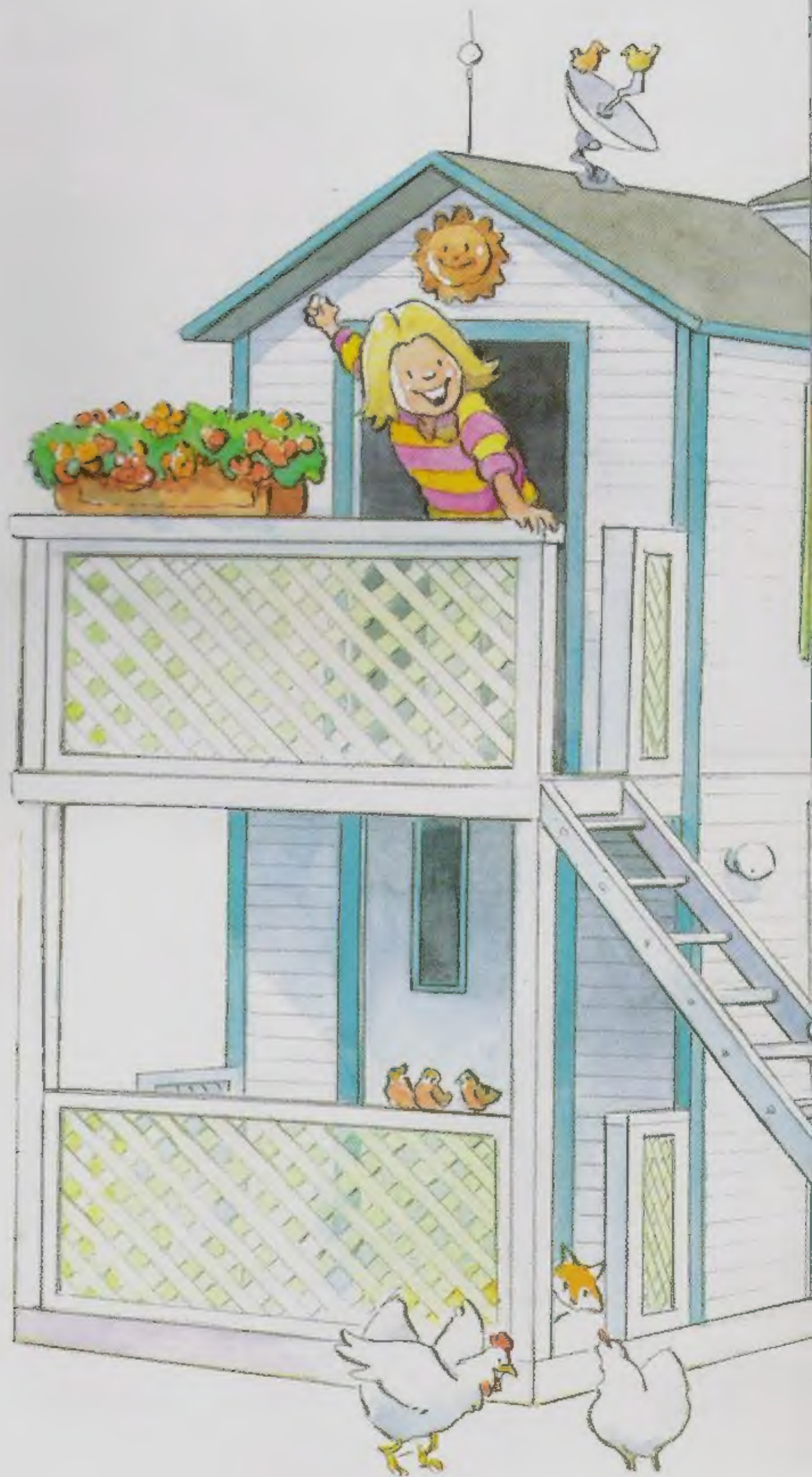
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To Rene Jakubowski and her family,
Endeavour, Saskatchewan
— R.M.

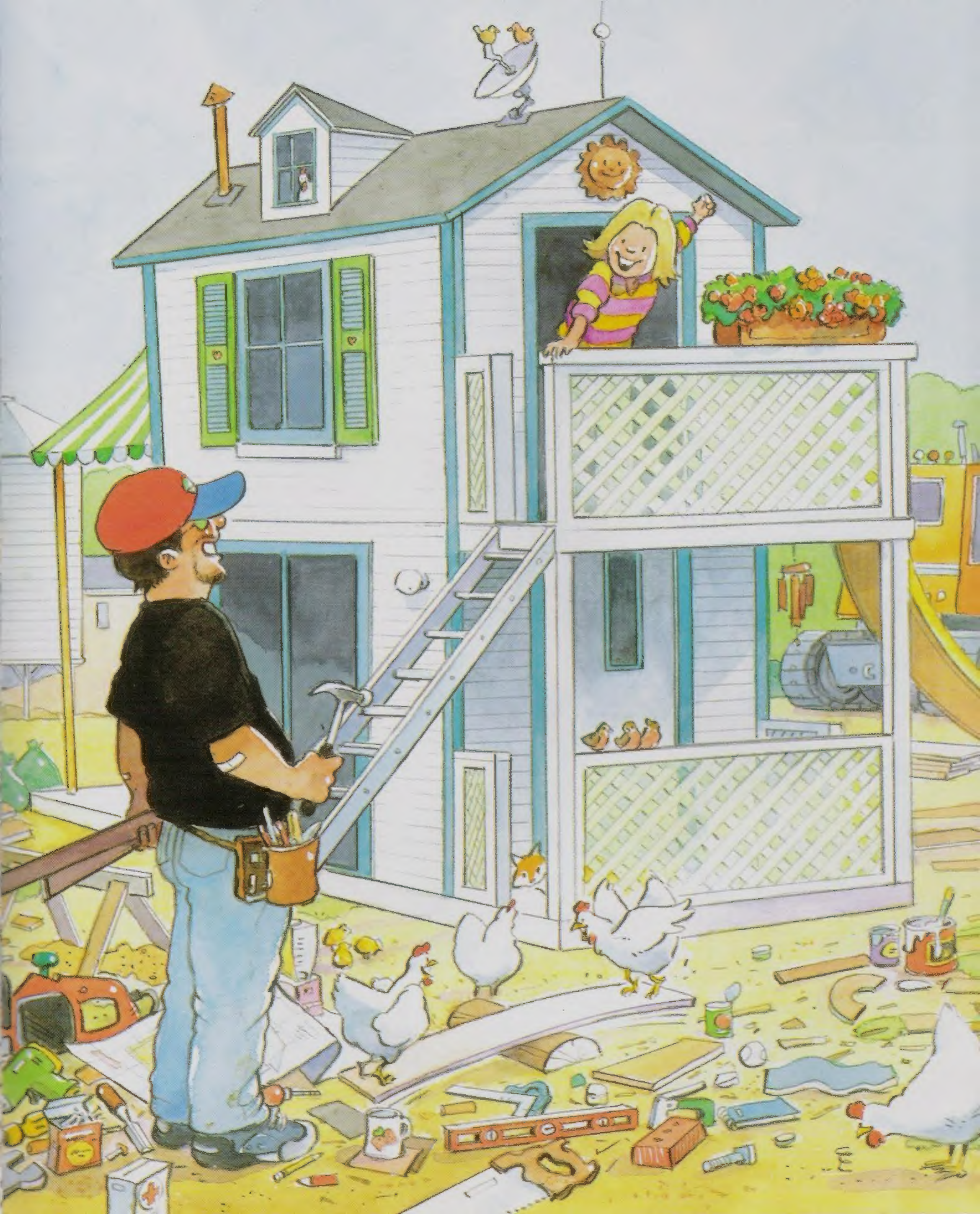


One day, Rene went to her father and said,
"Pleeeeeeease make me a playhouse! Our
farm is way out in the middle of the woods,
and I have nobody to play with except my
little brothers. I need a playhouse."





"Good idea," said Rene's father, and he made her a wonderful playhouse. It had real windows and a slide and a ladder and an upstairs and a downstairs. It was almost like a real house — but not quite.

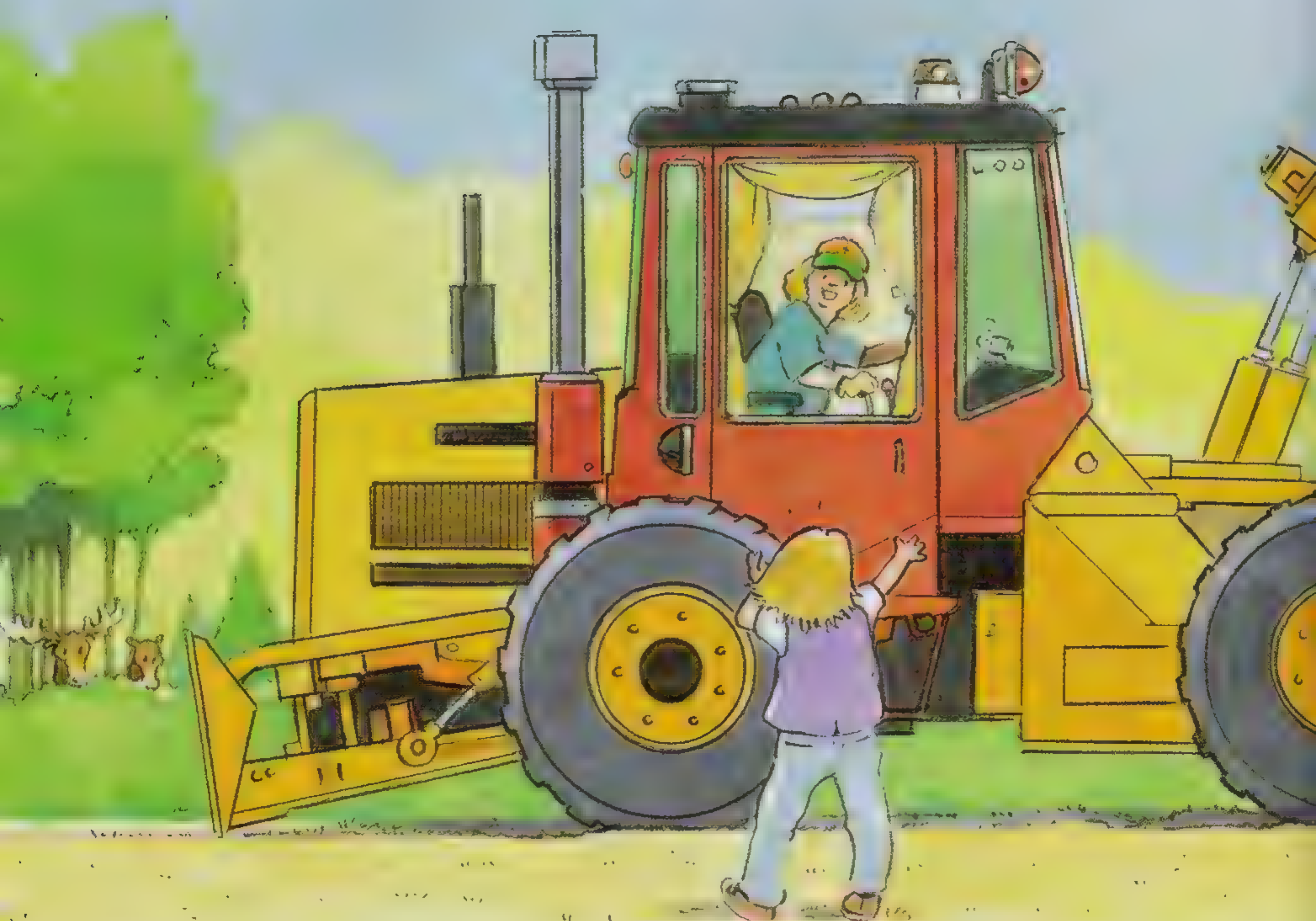




The next day, Rene moved lots of stuff from her room into the new playhouse, and it was even more like a real house. Then she drew fish all over the walls of the playhouse, just like the ones on the wall of her real bedroom.



Rene was happy for a whole week.
Then she went to her mother and said,
"Is this a city playhouse or a farm playhouse?"
"Well, Rene," said her mother, "we live on
a farm, so this must be a farm playhouse."



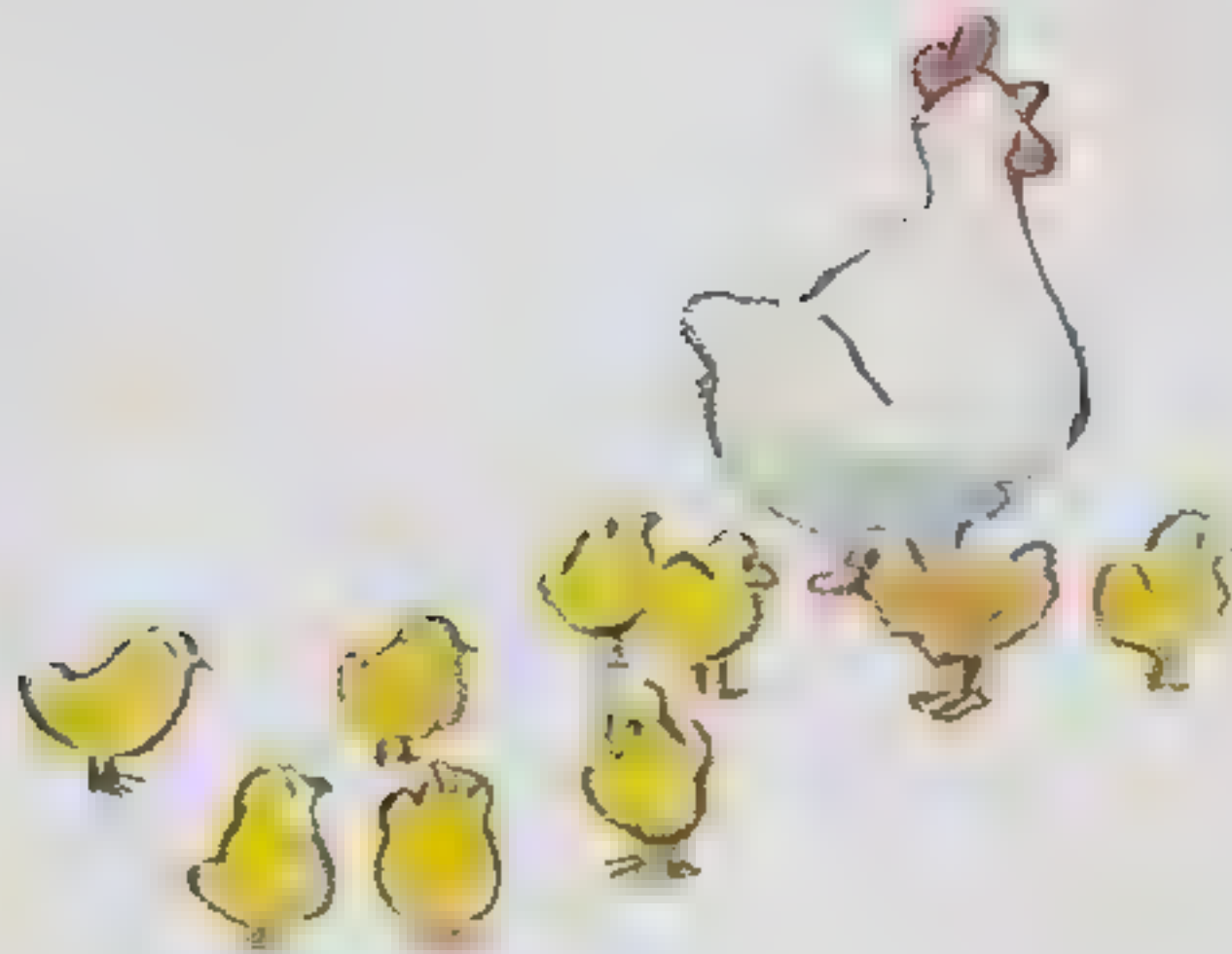
"Good," said Rene. "If it's a farm playhouse,
it needs a play barn."

"A play what?" said her mother.

"A play barn," said Rene.



“I never heard of a play barn,” said Rene’s mother, but she was such a nice mother that she built Rene a play barn. It took her two weeks.





Rene moved some hay and some chickens from the real barn into her play barn, and it was almost like a real barn — but not quite.

Then Rene went to her father and said, “I need a play cow.”

“A play what?” said her father.

“A play cow,” said Rene. “A farm playhouse needs a play barn, needs a play cow.”

“I can’t build a play cow,” said Rene’s father, “and the play barn is not big enough for a real cow.”



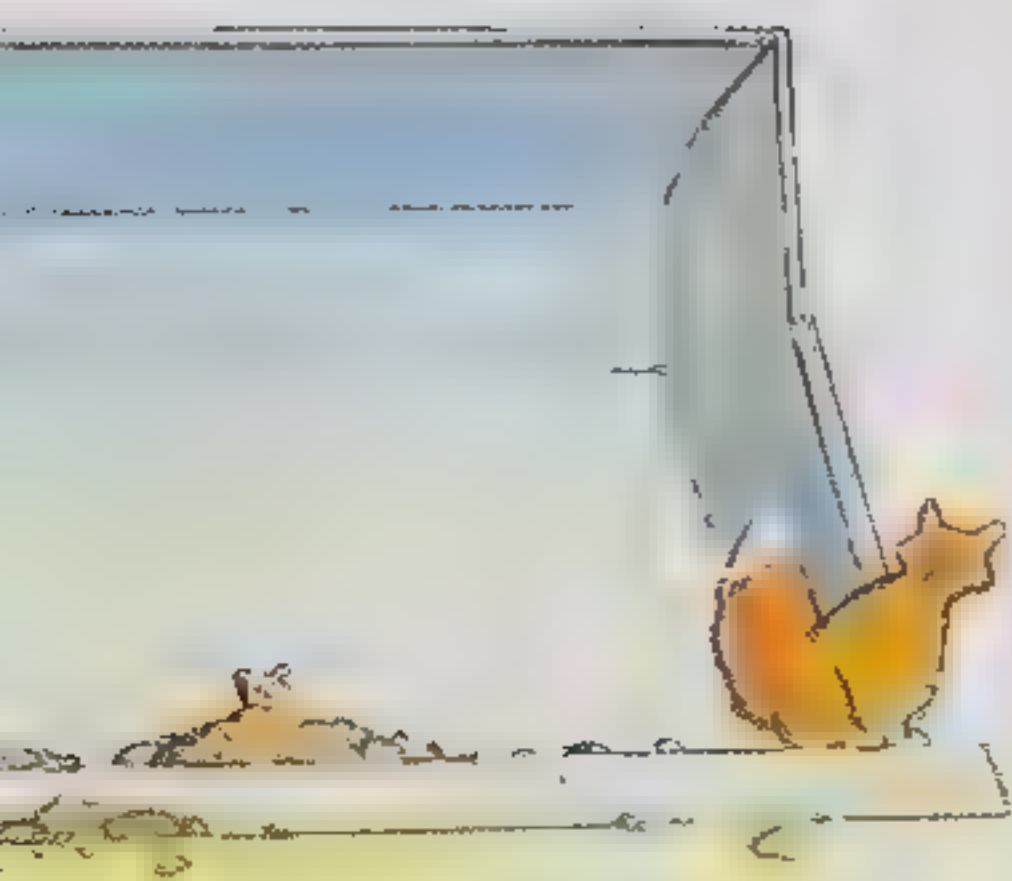
“No problem,” said Rene. “How about you give me a goat and paint it so it looks like a cow, and then I will have a play cow.”

So Rene’s father got her a goat and painted it so it looked like a cow. Rene put her play cow, which was really a goat, in the play barn, and she felt like she had a farm of her own — but not quite.



Then Rene went to her father and said, "My play farm is out in the middle of the woods just like our real farm, so it needs the tractor and the bulldozer and the tree snipper and the log chopper. Why don't you just park them by my playhouse, and then you will not have to make me anything new?"

So her father parked the tractor and the bulldozer and the tree snipper and the log chopper beside the playhouse, and Rene played quite nicely for a whole month.





Then Rene went to her mother and said
“A farm playhouse needs a play barn,
needs a play cow, needs a play tractor,
needs a play mommy and a play daddy.”

“A play who and a play what?” said
her mother.

“A play mommy and a play daddy,”
said Rene.

“No,” said Rene’s mother. “You already
have a real mommy and a real daddy. You
don’t need a play mommy and a play
daddy.”

“The real ones are too bossy,” said Rene

“Ha!” said her mother. “I am not going
to make you a play mommy and a play
daddy.”



So Rene cut out a cardboard play mommy and a cardboard play daddy and stuck them on the side of her playhouse, and while she was at it, she made two play brothers.





When Rene came in for dinner, there was a scarecrow sitting in her chair.

"What's that?" said Rene.

"That," said her mother, "is my Play Rene. She is always nice and never bossy. You can eat play food out in the playhouse with your play mommy and your play daddy."



Rene said, "Play Rene and I are going to go outside."

Then the real Rene took Play Rene and fed it to the play cow, which was really a goat. The goat ate all the clothes and all the straw, and soon Play Rene was completely gone.





Then Rene walked into the kitchen and gave her mother a kiss.

"Was that a real kiss or a play kiss?" said Rene's mother.

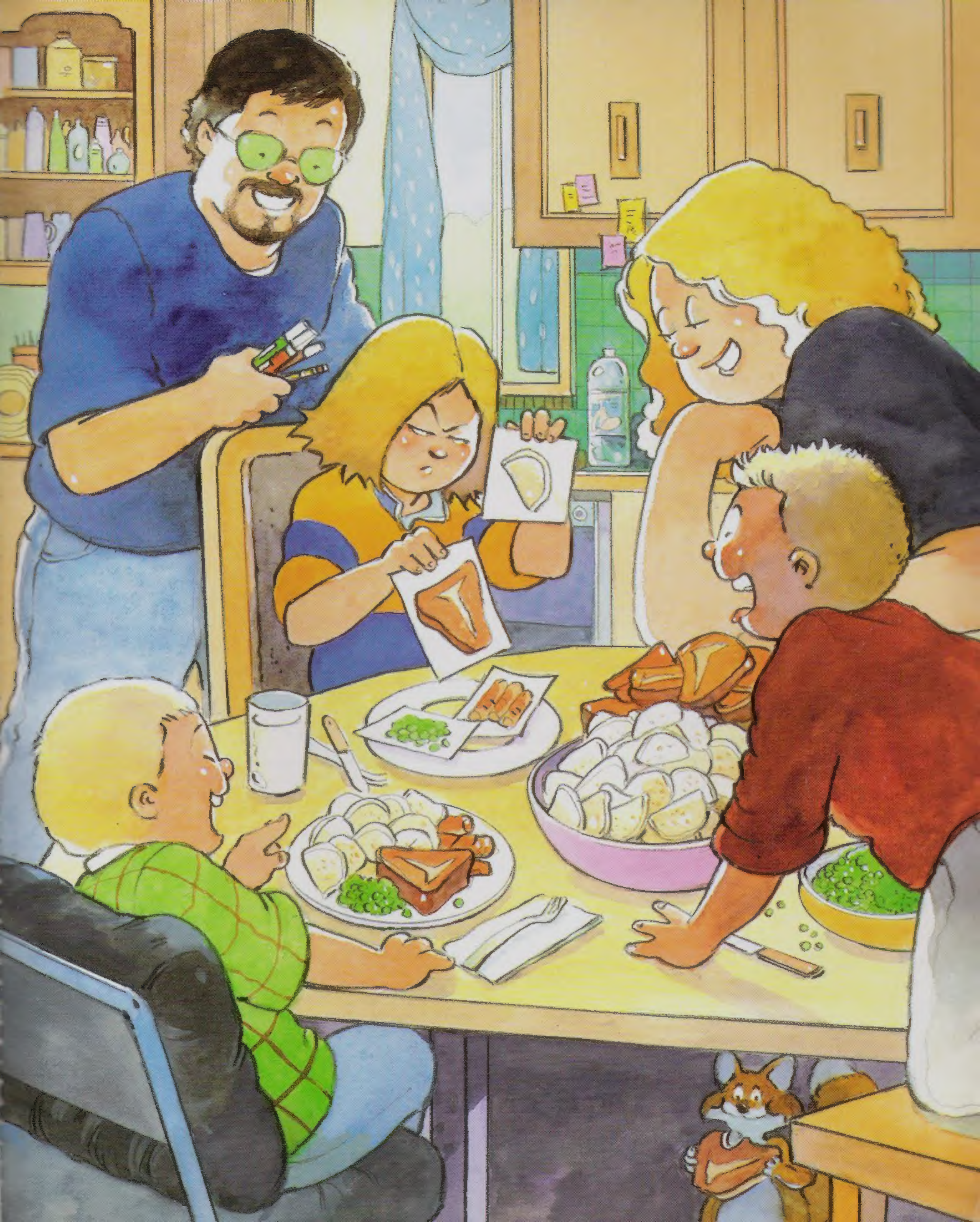
"That," said Rene, "was a real kiss, from a real bossy daughter for a real bossy mommy. Now can I have a real dinner with my real family?"

"No problem," said her mother. "I like real bossy kids better than play kids anyway."



And everyone had a
real wonderful dinner.







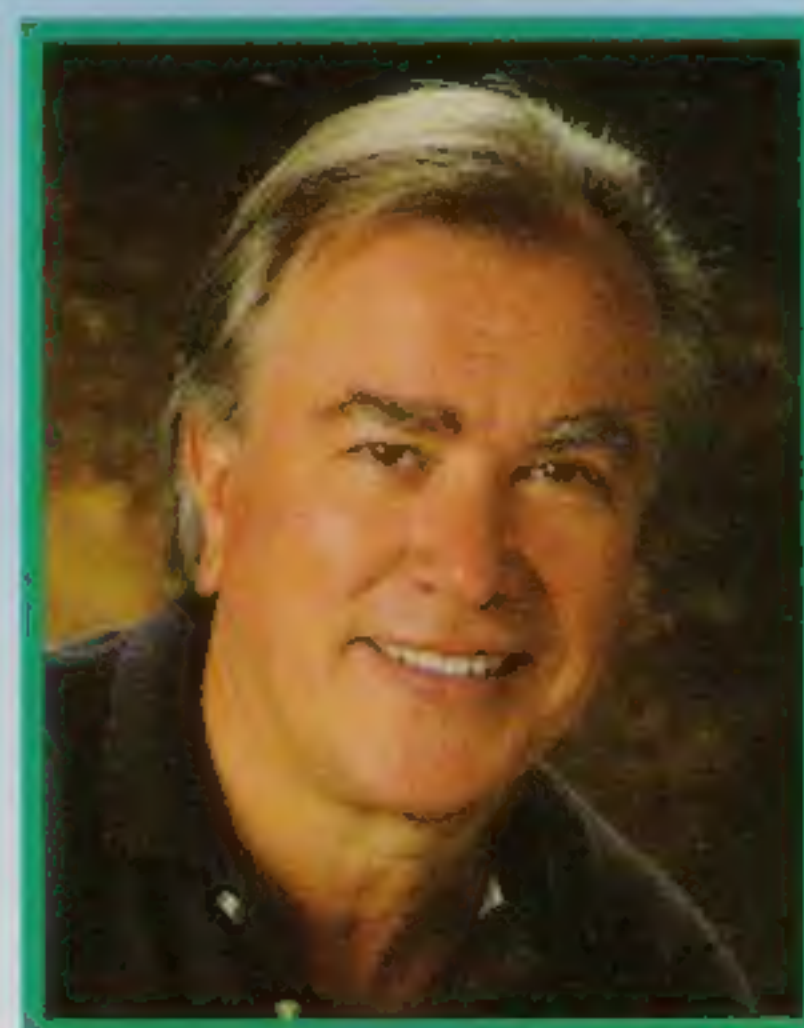
Rene has an excellent father who builds her a wonderful playhouse. But that's only the beginning of what Rene wants!



Robert Munsch

has written more than forty books, including *Love You Forever*, *Alligator Baby*, and *We Share Everything!* He wrote

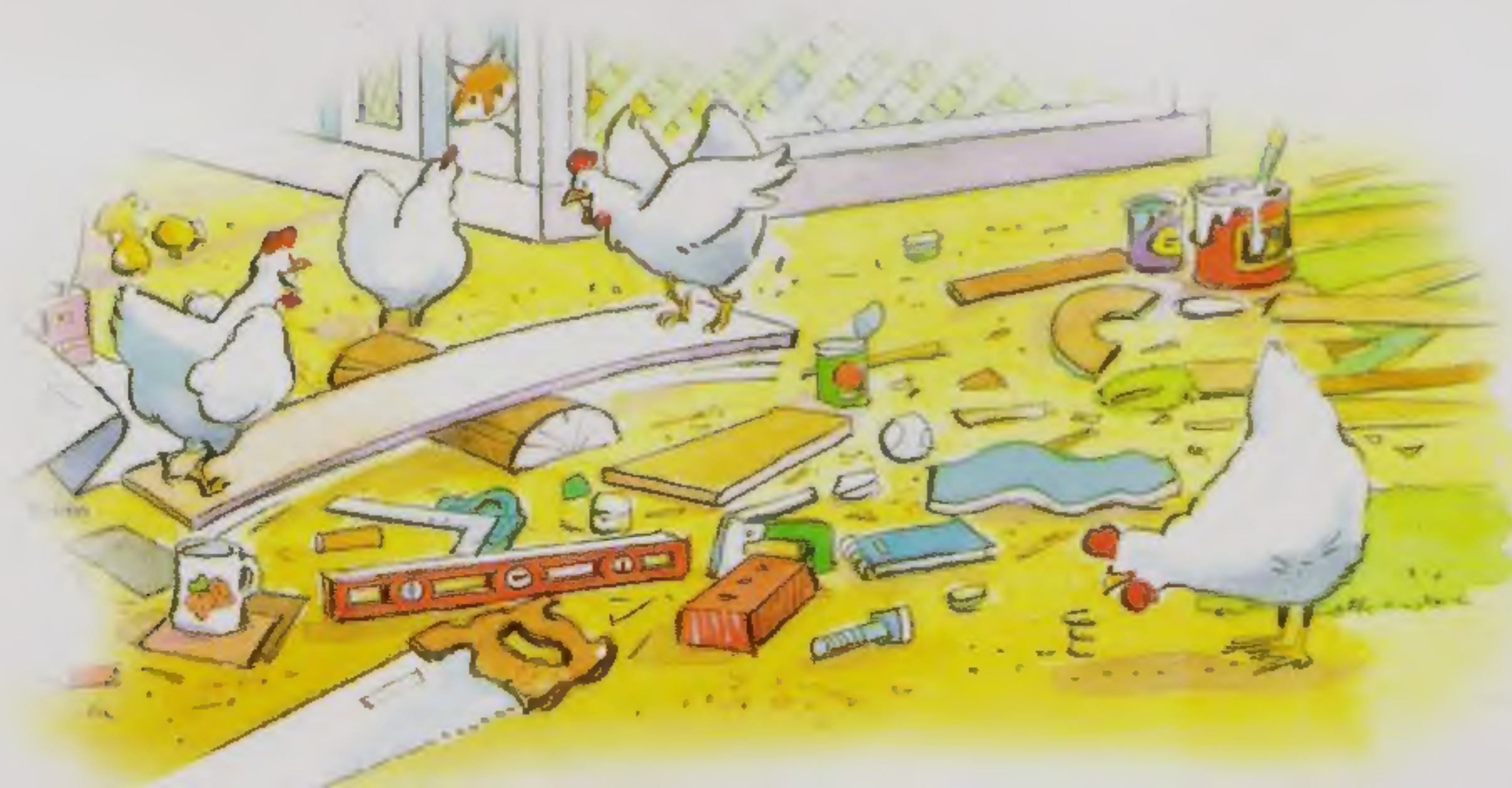
this story for a girl named Rene, who lives on a farm with her mom, dad, two brothers, and the best playhouse in all of Saskatchewan.



Michael Martchenko

has illustrated dozens of books, and has collaborated with Robert Munsch on many of them,

including *Andrew's Loose Tooth*, *The Paper Bag Princess*, and *Makeup Mess*.



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